

The San Diego Union

PAGE b-4

FRIDAY MORNING, OCT. 9, 1953

The Big Fish—Or a Fish Story?

RED SECRETS INVOLVED

CPYRGHT

Beria—A Story We Cannot Ignore

WHEREVER HE MAY BE, dead or alive, Lavrenti Beria holds information so important it could affect the future security of the world.

Perhaps he did die with these facts. He may be in prison. But there also is a possibility he lives with his secrets—hiding in a remote area of Spain.

Walter Winchell, in a telecast, properly evaluated the conjecture over Beria when he said that whether it was true or false, it is too big to reject without investigation.

The Western world has been dumfounded at information the Soviets have the know-how to produce the hydrogen bomb. Consternation is intensified because of lack of knowledge as to how far the Reds have gone in production of bombs and whether or not they have the long range bombers to deliver the bombs on the United States and other Western countries.

Facing this problem, every agency of the government, and particularly the State Department, should leave no stone unturned in an all-out effort to obtain this atomic and military information.

It's possible Beria could answer these questions.

Certainly, the United States ought not overlook even a vague possibility that a possible source for this information may lie at the end of the trail to the alleged Beria. Unconfirmed reports hold he wants to make a deal for asylum in the United States in return for up-to-the-minute information on Soviet atomic, military and espionage information.

Never has the American State Department, its Central Intelligence Agency, or any other government agency been offered even a remote chance to obtain informa-

tion comparable to that which the alleged Beria claims he will give.

It is clear it is the obligation of responsible government officials and agencies to determine the truth or falsity of the claim Beria wants to give this government all this vital information.

Fabio Gallo, the international political figure who claims he is the intermediary for Beria, has given regular reports on his purported progress to the United States' investigative agencies for many weeks.

The investigation culminated in reports to the State Department by government agencies during the week of Sept. 13. Yesterday, more than two weeks later, no progress had been announced by the United States government although the Spanish Ministry of Police had been conducting an intensive search.

To sum up, Beria, or an alleged Beria, claims he will give vital atomic and other information to this country in return for asylum. He has asked for assurance of this asylum through secret channels to United States officials and through published stories in The San Diego Union and newspapers throughout the world. Such assurance has not been given.

The whole matter well may be a giant hoax or a nefarious Communist plot somehow to damage the position of the United States in world politics. Nevertheless, that one long chance to bag Beria and all he knows cannot be rejected.

The State Department's clear responsibility to the people of the United States is to culminate this matter properly, exposing it as a hoax or delivering the goods—the latter being a diplomatic coup almost beyond imagination.

